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The Church Association
OF THE
DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

ADDRESS

TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
IN THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

TORONTO :

1878.

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The Church Association of the Diocese of Toronto.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, IN THE DIOCESE
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DEAR BRETHREN,

As members with you of our loved Church of England ; and earnestly desiring her prosperity, and her growth and progress commensurate with that of our young Dominion ; we seriously invite your attention to her present state, and to the duties required of us on her behalf.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York in their recent reply to the memorial signed by over 60,000 members of the Church of England, say explicitly ; " there can be no doubt that the danger you apprehend of a considerable minority both of clergy and laity among us desiring to subvert the principles of the Reformation, is real. " Having thus clearly recognized the great peril to which the Church is exposed, they appeal to the laity to take an active part in averting this deadly evil, stating that " the desire of the Bishops to maintain the purity of the Church must be greatly impeded where they cannot reckon upon the hearty and effectual co-operation of those laymen whose interests are most intimately involved ; " and the two Archbishops assert their conviction, that " the Bishops will never be found wanting in the desire to act with the attached laity of our Church in maintaining the real principles of the Reformation. " They accordingly call on our fellow-churchmen at home to consider whether the very existence of the national church is not imperilled by such danger ; and express the wish that they could see

"a readiness everywhere manifested on the part of the laity to use all the legitimate authority which is vested in them, through the election of Church-wardens; and all their personal influence to check the growth of Romanising tendencies."

Here, therefore, is an appeal from the chief Pastors and Bishops of the Church of England, calling for a united and hearty co-operation, alike of Clergy and Laity, in the maintenance of principles of vital importance, which they declare to us are not only at stake, but are being deliberately attempted to be subverted by unfaithful men professing to be ministers and members of the Church. The dangers thus earnestly pressed on every faithful member of the Church of England are no novel or sudden innovations; nor is it to be doubted that an organised system has been pursued, which, though traced in its inception, forty years ago, to the zeal of a group of devout men at Oxford, some of whom were actuated by an honest desire for a return to what they regarded as primitive principles, based on tradition, or taught by certain fathers of the Church; yet has unquestionably ended in a deliberate conspiracy to undo the great work of the Protestant Reformation. Nor must it be overlooked that neither earnestness nor devoted zeal, is any evidence of spiritual truth. If the advocates of ante-reformation doctrines, rites and ceremonies, which have already led hundreds of clergy and laity to renounce their allegiance to the Protestant Church of England, are zealous; the agents of the Church of Rome are not less so. Doubtless many of their fathers, when kindling the martyr fires at Smithfield, Hereford, and Oxford, believed they were doing God service. Nor does the Church of Rome any longer disguise her rejoicings at the results. "*The Catholic Register*," a Roman Catholic organ, in a recent issue, triumphantly sets forth the fact that the number of converts to Romanism in London alone, during the past year, has been upwards of 2000; and it adds: "the number of converts " during the last few weeks increased very much. Many, as we are informed, have joined us who are all but Catholics; and who had little need of instruction before they made up their minds to take the final, the long deferred, but the

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all-neededful step. From every Ritualistic congregation in London there is a continual stream of converts drifting towards us." The writer then goes on to enumerate the acquisitions by the Church, of country clergymen, "ladies connected with the Anglican Sisterhood," and others; and then he adds this emphatic testimony: "out of every twenty Anglicans who joined the (Roman) Catholic Church, not less than seventeen have been prepared for the step by the preaching they have heard from the Ritualistic pulpits, and by the practices they have got accustomed to in the Ritualistic Churches."

The record of the Reformed Church of England is a very noble one. To one of her martyred bishops the nation owes a free English Bible; to others of her martyrs and confessors, bishops, clergy, and laity, are no less due the liberty of conscience which followed in the wake of this precious boon of an open bible, and all the blessings traceable thereto. Much that is noblest and best in the history of England is traceable to the Reformation. Yet while we find the two Archbishops uniting to maintain "the principles of the Reformation," declaring that "our Reformers acted wisely in allowing the confessional no place in our Reformed Church," and urging "the attached laity of our Church" to persevere "in maintaining the real principles of the Reformation:" the very words *Protestant* and *Reformation* have become hateful to perverted ears; and the Protestant Church of England, is styled Anglo-Catholic, or by like terms suggestive of some affinity to the so-called "Catholic" Church of Rome. In "*The Church News*"—an acknowledged organ of the Ritualists,—the work for which Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, and others of the noblest and best among the devoted servants of Christ and his Church, laid down their lives, is spoken of as "protestant heresy," and the "pest of protestantism;" while, heedless even of the proprieties and decencies of ordinary language, in their unholy zeal against a work so greatly blessed of God, we find the "*Church Times*,"—another organ of the same party,—anathematising the Reformers by whose labours Romish error was uprooted, as "unredeemed villains," and "unmitigated scoundrels."

But it is urged by some that here at least, in Canada, no such danger is apparent; or at any rate that it has not reached such a height as to justify any action which may possibly cause divisions. Exhortations to unity and peace are every where pressed on us in reply to any appeal for action against insidious Romanising tendencies. To such we would reply, not lightly, but in earnest sincerity, in the words of the Apostle James, "the wisdom that is from above is *first pure*, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated." Let us remember, ere it be too late, what the history of this movement in England has been; how gradual have been the innovations, how specious the pretexts for introducing what the two Archbishops designate "improper changes in ritual and extravagance in doctrine." An early morning communion paves the way for partaking of the Lord's Supper fasting, next follow an unaccustomed vestment, a novel adornment of the communion table, a turning of the back upon the congregation, an elevation of the bread and wine, the use of incense, and at length a hint of some "ineffable mystery" in the symbols selected by our blessed Lord to typify his broken body and shed blood, "once for all" sacrificed for us. Or again with all the charms of music a novel doctrine is inserted in a hymn, and the members of the Protestant Church of England are invited to sing:—

"Shall we not love thee, Mother dear,
Whom Jesus loves so well?
And in His temple, year by year,
Thy joy and glory tell?"*

By such means, the beautiful, yet simple service of our Church is transformed at length into a cumbrously elaborated imitation of the mass. The "table" of the Lord is changed into an "altar," at which the priest becomes the supposed offerer of the victim; and the accessories suited to this ideal altar, which our reformers wisely rejected, as they hoped forever, have been reintroduced into the services of the English Church, and so have helped to revive old superstitions, and lead many back to the errors of the church of Rome.

* Hymns Ancient and Modern.

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Such are the means by which a new generation has been gradually familiarised with ritualistic novelties and popish superstitions, prepared for accepting a doctrine of the real presence undistinguishable to simple minds from a full-blown doctrine of transubstantiation, and finally for the restoration of the Romish confessional. "The real history of these cases," says the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol in a recent address, "is commonly as follows. The general congregation, though at first a little startled, excuse the excess in consideration of the amount of work, and of the obvious earnestness that is shown, they get used to the excesses and novelties, and they end in either liking them, or so far tolerating them as to be prepared to defend their minister against what they deem interference or aggression." In this way the Church has been led on step by step, till we see the faithless perverters of its simple services and scriptural doctrines, such as Maconochie and Littledale, Bennet and Purchas, sustained and defended by the "English Church Union," while the rites and ceremonies which they practise, and the doctrines which they teach, are scarcely distinguishable from those of Rome. Nay, so wholly is the honest zeal of the fathers of the Reformation forgotten, that a petition has been presented to the convocation of Canterbury signed by four hundred and eighty three clergymen, in favour of what they designate "Sacramental Confession," and it has been thought a sufficient answer to show how small is this number compared to the whole body of the clergy. Yet faithful and indignant protests are not wanting. The Bishop of Manchester in answering a memorial on the subject, speaks of "auricular confession" as "most demoralising to the individual conscience, and (as all history proves,) fruitful of the most mischievous consequences to both priest and penitent, and to society at large." The Bishop of London in replying to a similar appeal from St. George's, Hanover Square, urges above all on the laity, "the teaching in their families, and exemplifying in their lives, that sober, cheerful piety, which springing from a heart reconciled to God through Christ, lives in filial relation to our Heavenly Father; and can go at once to Him through the one only Mediator, for pardon for every sin, and for grace to help in every time

of need. There is no room for a confessor in a child-like religion like this."

The members of the Church in Canada are not wholly without need of such an exhortation, for the confessional is not unknown among ourselves; and ministers of our church are more and more asserting the character, and assuming the functions of confessing and sacrificing priests. A clergyman of the Diocese of Toronto has appeared as a delegate to the Provincial Synod in a *soutane*, hitherto the characteristic garb of a Romish Priest. Two others of our clergy, one of them only recently ordained, presented themselves at last Diocesan Synod in similar garbs, and one of them with a large cross hanging at his breast, by what resembled, if it was not, a rosary. Yet, such significant assumptions pass unrebuked. The members of Synod at the same meeting had put into their hands a leaflet bearing an engraved figure of St. Lawrence, with his gridiron in his hand, inviting them to attend a meeting of the Guild of S. Laurence, the Martyr, at the Chapel "of the Holy Cross," to hear "a paper on guild work." Processions and processional hymns are now of common occurrence. The offertory is converted into an offering. Not only is the turning of the back to the people by the officiating minister, and his bowing to the communion table on which the elements are placed, not unknown in Canada; but also the more recent novelty has been practised of placing the bread on the recipient's tongue, and pouring the wine into his mouth, without his being permitted to touch the bread and cup. Surely, with the example of England's recent experiences before us and with such indications as our own warning, we may apply to ourselves the remonstrance of our blessed Lord, "Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

It may be that we have not to fear all the evils that the parent church has already experienced. It is more likely—and enough has already transpired to confirm its probability,—that the Canadian Church will lose a much larger number of members such as she can ill spare, by their deserting her for other Protestant communions, than by their returning to the errors and superstitions from which our church was delivered at the Reformation.

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But if we would have our Church prove herself faithful to the commission of her Divine Founder, and worthy of the noble army of the martyrs by whom her pure scriptural doctrines and articles have been established and maintained, so that she shall grow with the progress and meet the ever-increasing wants of this young Dominion, we must, indeed, "discern the signs of the times." The Archbishops of our Mother Church exhort the laity to co-operate with their bishops and clergy in stemming the tide of error. The Bishop of London, in like manner, says: "After all, grave as is the responsibility of the clergy, the remedy of the evil complained of lies greatly in the hands of the laity. In the present day developments of ritual and matters of church discipline and practice are governed less by law than by public opinion."

Shall we remain idle, or heedless of such appeals? Is this a time for the cry of "peace! peace?" when the sacramentarian doctrines of a thinly-disguised transubstantiation,—which lie at the foundation of all the recent revival of medieval ceremonies and vestments, bowings to the "altar," decorating the communion tables with varying coloured coverings, with flowers, candles, and crosses; elevating the cup; receiving the bread on the crossed palm, or directly into mouth, &c., are openly avowed and preached. Can action be delayed any longer with safety? Things seemingly innocent in themselves such as floral decorations, "altar-cloths," alms basins deposited with formal reverence and genuflexion on the communion table, novelties in the fashioning of the surplice, &c., become replete with danger as the first steps in a decline from the practices of the church of our fathers. We must not lose sight of the fact that the simple, yet becoming, services of our church were purposely substituted, at the Reformation, for the elaborate ceremonial of a worship in which even innocent rites and devices had been turned to superstitious uses. For, as the preface to our prayer-book says: some ceremonies "at the first were of Godly intent and purpose" "devised, and yet at length turned to vanity, and superstition; *some entered into the Church by indiscreet devotion, and such a zeal as was without knowledge; and for because they were winked at in the beginning, they grew daily to more and more abuses.*" These, therefore, were rejected: even

as we, acting in the spirit of our reforming fathers, must anew reject such fruits of "undiscreet devotion, and zeal without knowledge." Only those, we are instructed, were retained which although of human device, it was thought good to retain "as well for a decent order in the Church, (for the which they were first devised), as because they pertain to edification, whereunto all things done in the Church (as the Apostle teacheth), ought to be referred."

In view of this we cannot lose sight of the Jesuitical doctrines of "reserve" as now taught, which consists in the introduction of Ritualistic novelties and Romanising doctrines by such slow degrees, that the minds of the young shall be gradually trained to such innovations; and the whole be at length recognized as part and parcel of the regular service of the congregation. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of every attached and faithful member of our church to resist even slight and seemingly innocent innovations on its services, no matter from what quarter they come.

The time has manifestly arrived in this country when it is incumbent on all who are true to the principles of the "pure and reformed" Church of England to be up and doing. Let there be the utmost care in the selection of faithful churchmen, alike as churchwardens and delegates to our synods. Let there be a wise fidelity in advising with the Bishop as to the appointments to be made when vacancies occur in our parishes. Let the Bishop be promptly made aware of any novelties either in doctrine or ceremony. Let us respond as a church to the exhortations of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, by showing such a readiness to use all legitimate means to check the growth of Romanizing tendencies, as shall prove us worthy of the precious inheritance which we have received from our reforming fathers; and for which that Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, who gave the nation a free English Bible, perished at the stake.

Let us indeed have union among all true Churchmen; not by blindly neglecting the dangers which now beset our beloved church, or extending a false charity to those who are unfaithful to the principles on which she utterly rejected all relation to the

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Church of Rome, as a church which "hath erred not only in living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith:" but let us be united as one man to maintain the doctrines established at the Reformation, to preserve the simplicity of our Protestant worship, and the purity of our Church's spiritual teaching.

If such a union is indeed to be efficacious, it must be aimed at, as well as carried out, in no spirit of strife. We cannot pray too earnestly that the influence of the Holy Spirit may be anew poured out on the Church with quickening power; and may lead all her members to the acknowledgement of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Above all, while each individual must labour, as if under God, the preservation of our beloved Church in her purity, depended on his exertions; let us ever keep in view the Apostolic precept: "That there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Let us strive to banish all mere party spirit, and all differences that are not rooted in principle, and in our duty to the Church and her Divine Head. Let us, above all, pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit may so enlighten our understanding, that we may act "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

On behalf of the Association,

(Signed,) W. H. DRAPER, *President.*

B. HOMER DIXON, } *Hon'y Secretaries.*
J. GILLESPIE, }

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